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BRETT DENNEN
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Third Day Of July

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Take 2 Productions

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Manhattan

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Manhattan

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Xact Productions

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Self-released

Suddyn
Suddyn

The Sheds
Self-released

Kathleen Haskard
Howlin' Hound

Sara Melson
Nettwerk

Miranda Lee Richards
Nettwerk

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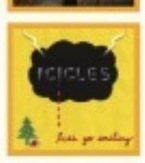

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PROMOTIONAL

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FEATURES

SHE & HIM 40

"I'd rather be a songwriter than be an actor," says Zooey Deschanel, the primary pronoun of She & Him. As much as we loved her in *Weeds*, we'd have to agree with that sentiment, as she and M. Ward have made our favorite album this year.

BY JOSH JACKSON | PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEANN MUELLER

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THE WELCOME WAGON:
KEEPERS OF THE FAITH THRIVE IN THE HIPSTERS' DEN

A Presbyterian minister and his wife take a break from tending their flock to play some heartfelt religious tunes, conspiring with Sufjan Stevens and drawing on songs from hymnbooks, Lou Reed and The Smiths for their one-of-a-kind new record. BY REID DAVIS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DENNY RENSHAW

BEST OF 2008 34

Another year has drawn to a close, which means it's time once again to reveal which pieces of art & entertainment blew our skirts up highest in the last 365 days.

Vintage dress white w/silver beading courtesy of Kemal & Karla Tights American Apparel Black hair pin, vintage rhinestone bow courtesy of Kemal & Karla Shoes Devi Kroell Grey wool suit Obedient Sons Vintage red & black flannel shirt courtesy of Kemal & Karla Black flower broach and men's shoes courtesy of Kemal & Karla

Sometimes you click web, and let's be honest, you're not sure what to expect. But this browser sure looks, like, well, like a browser. All my favorite sites are here. They just seem so fast, and now I can take them with me. This is 3G? Me likey.

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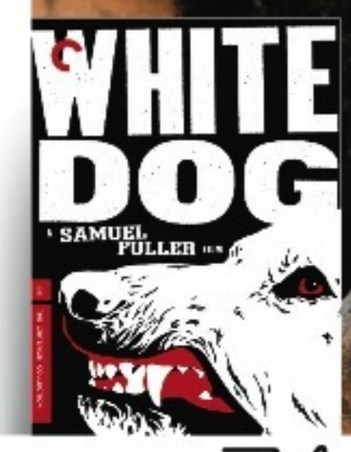

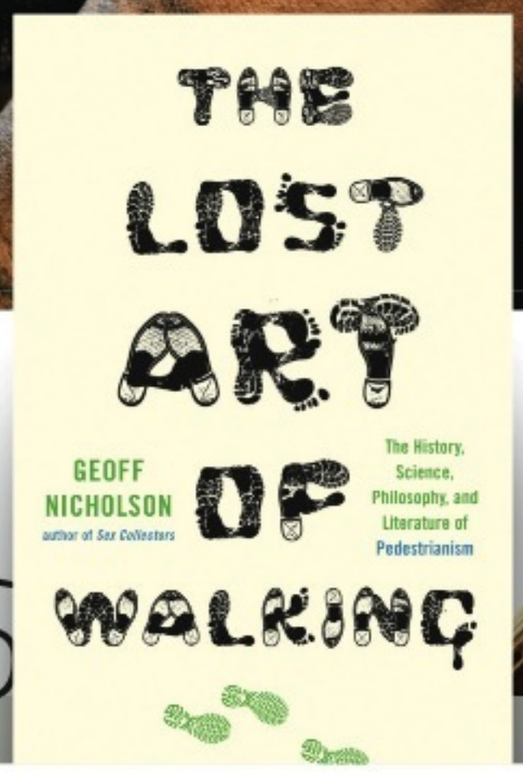
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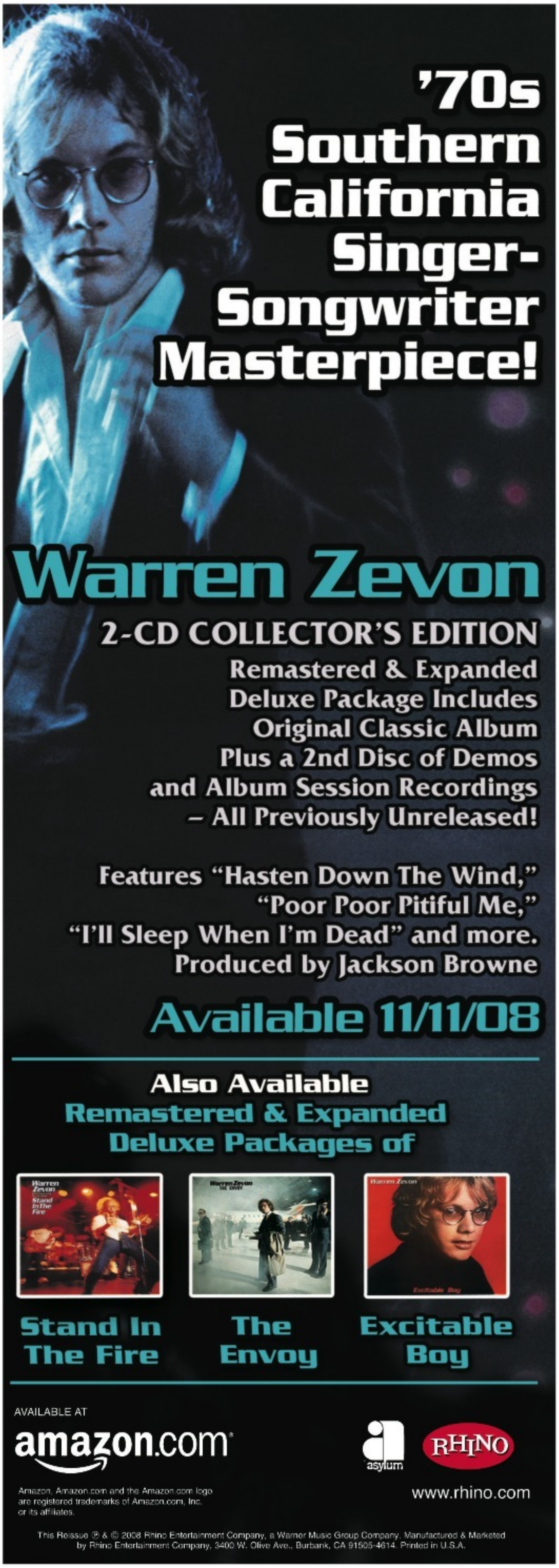
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ONLINE

Reviews of films *Quantum of Solace* and ***Milk*** (pictured above), Kanye West's new album *808s & Heartbreak*, and video games including *Guitar Hero World Tour* and *Mirror's Edge*.

Live performances from The Low Anthem (top), Joan Osborne, Samantha Crain & the Midnight Shivers, Ron Sexsmith (L-R) and more.

Plus, add your own user rating to anything reviewed in this issue.

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EDITORIAL

BY JOSH JACKSON

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Before sitting down to write about this "Best of 2008" issue, I plopped on the couch and watched NBC's *Chuck*. Twice during the episode, I was pleased to hear The National's "Fake Empire" from *Paste*'s 2007 album of the year, *Boxer*. It felt a little like last year's Miss America showing up for one final night in the spotlight. I'm now listening to the whole record as I write, and I still believe *Boxer* was 2007's best. Of course, it's always hard to know what's going to stick with you over time. I look back a little regretfully at 2004, when after a week with U2's *How to Build An Atomic Bomb*, we were ready to put it at the top of the list in a year that saw lasting greats like Arcade Fire's *Funeral* and Iron & Wine's *Our Endless Numbered Days*. But I still regularly listen to all of our other No. 1 picks from years past: Rosie Thomas' *When We Were Small* (2002), Rufus Wainwright's *Want One* (2003), Sufjan Stevens' *Illinois* (2005) and The Decemberists' *The Crane Wife* (2006).

This year, as always, there were a lot of great albums to choose from. We collected nominations from staff and writers, and among the 18 final ballots we received were 15 different No. 1 picks. (You can take a look at my personal favorite albums of the year on my blog: PasteMagazine.com/high_gravity.)

Looking through our list, I noticed how most of these records didn't make much of a dent in the *Billboard* 200 chart. Only Death Cab For Cutie's *Narrow Stairs* held the top spot during the year. We've never made a conscious choice to ignore what's popular, but even with all the changes in music distribution, there's still a pretty big discrepancy between the music we love and what's selling at Best Buy and Wal-Mart.

But while She & Him and Fleet Foxes might not collect gold records this year, we're happy to hand them a little gold star and thank them for making 2008 sound that much sweeter. And we can rest easier knowing that the opportunity for these bands to make a living is growing, even while the old music-industry machinery implodes around them.

As that episode of *Chuck* I was watching ended, the show's accidental spy came to terms with the realization that he couldn't be with his true love, while the sad and lovely strains of Bon Iver's "Skinny Love"—from our No. 4 album of the year, *For Emma, Forever Ago*—swelled and the credits rolled. Here's to those times when the best music finds its way to the masses.

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We all want to do our part to lessen our impact on the environment. A recent survey of *Paste* subscribers revealed that ***68% of you would prefer*** to take your monthly *Paste* Sampler as a secure download. So we're thrilled to announce this option beginning with our February 2009 issue. Additionally, if you would prefer to receive the magazine itself in digital form, you can do that, too. Just find your subscriber number on your mailing label and head to pastemagazine.com/green to sign up! New to *Paste*? You can head to pastemagazine.com/green, too!

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INBOX

STREAMING GOODNESS

I've been an avid fan of your magazine for the last few years and I was pleasantly surprised to find new album streams on the website. I didn't think the magazine could get any better! My workday is even more enjoyable now that I can check out whole albums by new artists—at my leisure and at high-quality bit rate. I'd love it if you could add a few more albums! In the meantime I'll enjoy excellent music reviews and eagerly anticipate the return of the downloadable-MP3 media section.

LUKE MANNING { College Station, Texas }

(CORMAC) MCCARTHYISMS

After reading Mr. Richardson's article in your October '08 issue ("My History of Violence"), I found that I disagreed with a number of his points on the nature of media and violence. All this is well and good, of course, because of the polarizing nature of the issue, to which everyone is entitled their opinion. This letter, though, specifically regards a statement by Mr. Richardson that was irresponsible at best: "Nihilism is now so universally confused with profundity that even the serious literary establishment can't see that Cormac McCarthy is really just Stephen King without the entertainment value." Any member of the "literary establishment" who would label Cormac McCarthy a nihilist and his writing an outpouring of such beliefs would likely be disregarded in further legitimate discussion on his body of work. Not only is McCarthy a well-known Catholic, but all of his plays and many of his novels, *Suttree* in particular, concern themselves with the redemption of mankind. Even recent dark novels like *No Country for Old Men* and *The Road* utilize violence and depravity as a canvas on which to depict the beauty of simple kindness. *Paste* is one of the few magazines in America today that appears to maintain a commitment to rational analysis of music, literature and culture, making an errant statement of this kind all the more grievous.

JOSEPH KOCH { via email }

THE VIOLENCE ISSUE
Paste
PLAYING WITH GUNFIRE
A report on the military video-game complex
CHOKING ON CHUCK PALAHNIUK
Slapstick Comedy's GREATEST HITS
A medical doctor assesses the damage
AND WAYNE COYNE ON FAKE BLOOD

RESPECTING INTELLIGENCE

I'm a longtime subscriber to *Paste* and just wanted to say that I never fail to be surprised with each new issue received. The November issue arrived in my mailbox today, and I found my most recent surprise in the editorial from Josh Jackson. The reference to and quote from Walker Percy's novel *The Moviegoer* is the perfect example of why this is such a unique and valuable publication. It happens that Percy is one of my favorite writers, and since he has been dead for some years, the place I would normally expect to encounter him would be in a college classroom. But there's no attempt to dumb down the information offered in *Paste*. I hope you never feel the need to spoon-feed your readers. I know of no other magazine that deals with entertainment that includes not just the variety of genres you offer but the diverse audiences you address. And I hope that you'll continue to include the irony and the tongue-in-cheek that's part of my reason for reading the reviews and opinions offered on cultural issues. So in response to Jackson's editorial about searching for the things we most enjoy in order

Paste

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to make the most of our free time, I've been guided by *Paste*, and so far I have not been led astray.
LOIS MENDENHALL { Columbia, S.C. }

BLOODY WELL DONE

Of the two years I've been a subscriber to *Paste*, the Violence Issue (Oct. '08) was my favorite. I especially enjoyed the article, "Sabbath Bloody Sabbath," by Bart Blasengame, being a member of the Church of Christ myself. I probably sang "Power in the Blood" hundreds of times growing up and never thought of it from that point of view. It really brings into perspective how the apostles felt when Jesus told them, "You will eat my flesh and drink my blood." It's definitely a radical statement, even for someone who understands the context and symbolism. I also enjoy your coverage of Sacred Harp and a capella music. It's a big part of Church of Christ tradition, especially here in the South. I've had the privilege of leading singing at a few different churches and it is always a unique experience and extremely gratifying. Keep up the good work! **RYLAN COX** { Manchester, Tenn. }

LETTER HAIKU

Crack journalism
A haiku for a review?
Try harder next time
PATRICK MARTIN
{ Chicago }

WHEN YOU WERE WRONG

I was just reading over proof pages—as I do every deadline—making sure that no embarrassing typos slip into print, and I came across this doozy of an error from Kelly Marages' review of The Killers' new album (pg. 50). In her reflections on "When You Were Young," easily one of my favorite songs of the past several years, Marages claims that "the heavy guitars and Springsteen style rang false." I immediately fact-checked this statement with Alan Greenspan, the Dalai Lama, Stephen Hawking and Chuck Norris. They all confirmed my belief that (a) the so-called " heavy guitars" are crunchy and epic and extremely awesome, and (b) the "Springsteen style ringing false" comment is ludicrous because there was a highly respected voodoo witch doctor in the studio helping Brandon Flowers channel Bruce's incendiary verve. I'll go ahead and mark the change here on the proof page, but I wanted you to be aware so you can make a special grouping in the editorial masthead called "Contributing Writers Who Are Mistaken," under which Marages' name will appear all by itself.
JASON KILLINGSWORTH { Deputy Editor, *Paste* }

The Killers photo by Torey Mundkowsky

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****** -SPIN**
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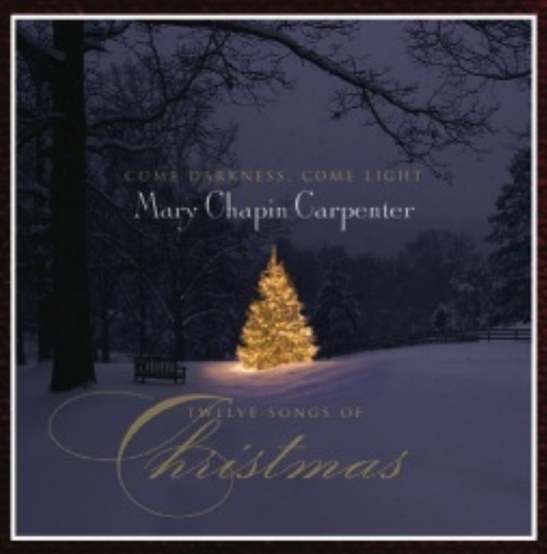

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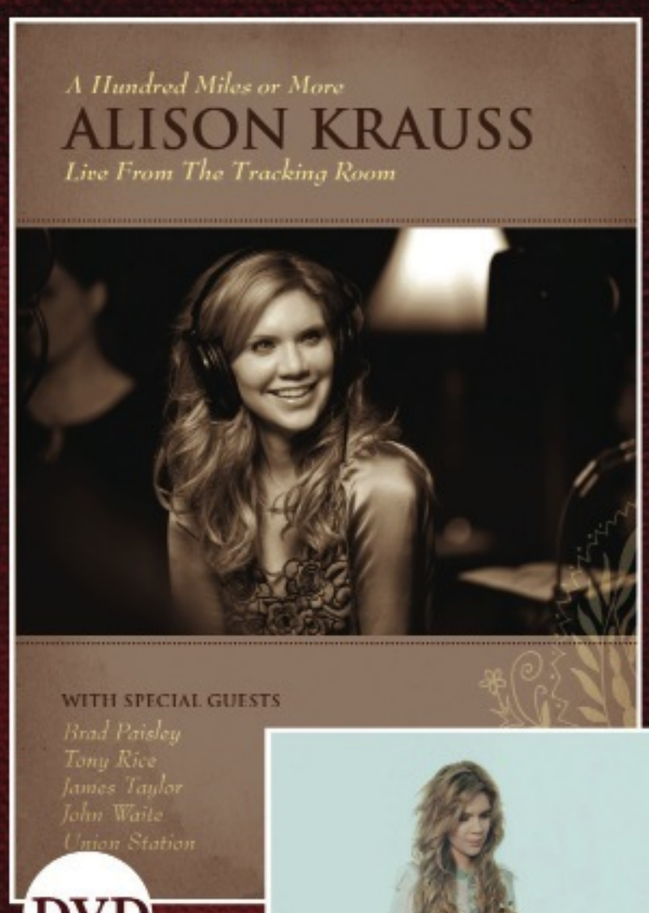

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CHE GUEVARA HATES STEVEN SODERBERGH

NEVERTHELESS, AWARD-WINNING DIRECTOR DELIVERS EPIC BIOPIC

You bought the T-shirt—now go see the movie. That's the logic Steven Soderbergh hopes will draw audiences to *Che*, his four-hour, Spanish-language revolutionary epic starring Benicio Del Toro as heroic physician-turned-guerrilla Ernesto "Che" Guevara. The irony is not lost on the director. "He's the icon of Marxist-Leninist economic ideology," Soderbergh says during a press conference at the New York Film Festival, "and you stick his face on anything and it sells."

Old school in the term's best sense, *Che* unspools more as a classic war movie than leftist polemic. Part one, "The Argentine," tracks the successful jungle campaign fought by Che and a band of 80 rebels to overthrow Cuba's Batista regime in the late 1950s. It's presented as a flashback, framed by his 1964 visit to address the United Nations in New York. Part two, "Guerilla," follows the suicidal mission in Bolivia that led to Che's 1967 death. The films will be released separately, *Kill Bill*-style, in Europe, but will initially roll out in America as a vintage road show: limited engagements in New York and L.A., with handbills and an intermission.

"It's a lot to ask of someone to throw away an entire day," Soderbergh says. "But we're making a demand on the audience very similar to the demands Che made on the people around him." It took Soderbergh seven years of research to craft Guevara's cinematic persona, a task that posed more than the usual biopic challenges. "There's a million Ches. He means something different to everyone. But I knew what I didn't want to do. I tried to avoid scenes that were too typical. There is no scene where someone says, 'Hey, why do they call you Che?' and then he goes and picks up his beret."

The film does set up moments for Del Toro to deliver historic quotes ("The true revolutionary is guided by strong feelings of love"), but it also digs up previously undocumented anecdotes gleaned from firsthand research. Soderbergh also refused to turn Che into a secular saint. The film celebrates his passion, but Soderbergh has no illusions about Che's tough-mindedness. "There isn't even a place for me in the society that Che was trying to build," the director says. "He believed that there was no great artist who was a revolutionary. Personally, he would have hated me." **STEVE DOLLAR**

Benicio Del Toro as Che. Photo by Teresa Isasi

EARS WE TRUST

Rita Houston, WFUV, New York

Little Jackie
The Stoop **[S-Curve]** With rhymes to spare, this Brooklyn duo just might be able to change the world with clever wordplay that brings you right into the heart of their 'hood.

Joan Osborne
Little Wild One **[Womanly Hips/Plum]** New York City is the backdrop for these heartfelt songs in classic singer/songwriter style. She still belts some, too.

Amy Ray
Didn't It Feel Kinder **[Daemon]** A solo album that's both simple and grand in its songwriting and production. Even a true Indigo Girls fan may not recognize Amy's soul-drenched voice on songs like "She's Got To Be."

Nikka Costa
Pebble to a Pearl **[Stax]** She was way ahead of her time, and now many other artists have ridden the retro-soul train to the bank. I still say she can sing 'em and write 'em better than most. Plus, she calls Frank Sinatra "godfather."

Radiohead
"Last Flowers" **[self-released]** Don't miss this essential, spooky *In Rainbows* bonus track.

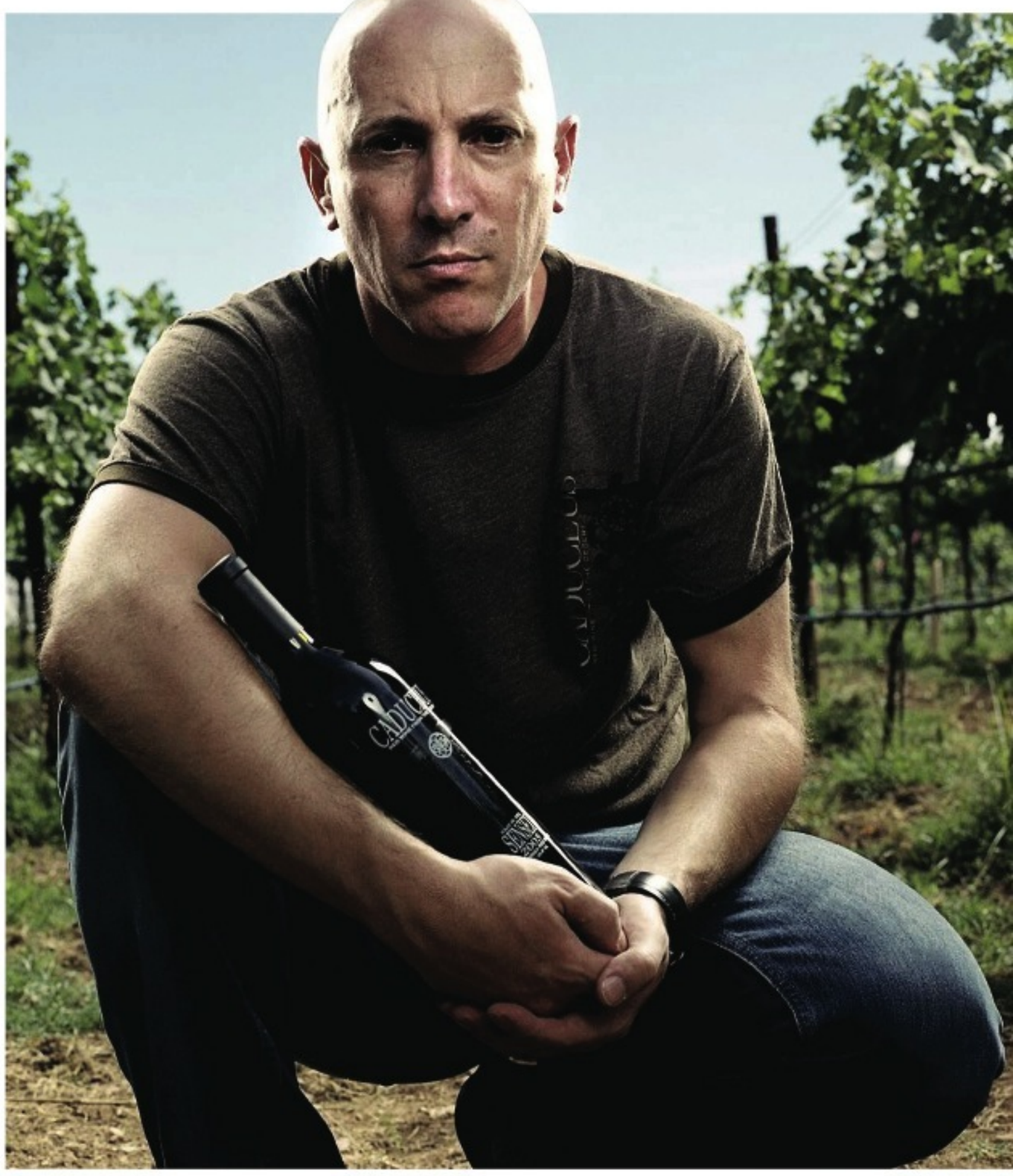
Rita Houston is a vinyl junkie, hiker and part-time wino, as well as WFUV's music director and host of *The Whole Wide World with Rita Houston.*

MIXED *media* WHICH ARTIST ON THIS PAGE HAS THE CLEAREST NASAL PASSAGES?

TOOL & WINE:
ALT-ROCK FRONTMAN UNCORKS NEW CAREER

Behind the tasting bar of Mission Wines, a South Pasadena wine shop with hardwood floors, Maynard James Keenan is slurping his wine. No really, it's *his* wine. The reclusive frontman for prog-metal bands Tool and A Perfect Circle is drinking Tazi, a light blend of sauvignon blanc, chardonnay and other grapes from his own Arizona Stronghold Vineyards. The scene is slightly surreal, given that this is the guy who wrote and sang songs called "Prison Sex" and "Hooker with a Penis."

After joking about holding hands and praying to Bacchus before the tasting, Keenan turns to the matter at hand. He aspirates while taking a sip, ensuring the juice hits every part of his palate, and he instructs those around him to do the same. Putting his nose to the glass, he takes a long, deep sniff and offers advice for the novice taster: "Wine tasting is predominantly smelling. If you plug your nose, you won't have the same experience at all."



Low-key and dressed in a plaid grey shirt, jeans and boots, Keenan is decidedly anti-celebrity in a town full of them. He goes largely unnoticed except for a twenty something couple quietly browsing the wine shop's aisles, waiting for the chance to get a bottle autographed after our interview. Keenan begins the tasting process again with two more of his just-released reds, Nachise and Mangus—named, like all of his wines, after relatives of the Chiricahua Apache chief Cochise, who lived in southeastern Arizona, where the vineyard is located.

At 44, Keenan—a former West Point cadet—has become a sort of Renaissance man, traveling the world with his bands and learning about life's finer things, which include good and bad wines. "There's a difference between Milli Vanilli and Led Zeppelin," he deadpans. Keenan began studying wine in earnest in 1999, and opened Caduceus Cellars winery and Merkin Vineyards in northern Arizona (not too far from John McCain's house in Cornville) a few years later. And yes, his dark humor is evident in the vineyard's name. A "merkin" is a pubic wig.

Last year, he and fellow vintner Eric Glomski bought one of the oldest vineyards in the state, and opened ASV. They see themselves as pioneers of Arizona winemaking. Glomski notes that ASV's Cochise County sits about 4,500 feet above sea level, making it a cooler climate than popular California grape regions like Paso Robles. And Keenan describes bringing a wine-centric way of life to the Grand Canyon state, with a community, economy, social structure and politics focusing on winemaking—all the way down to "the electrician who understands air conditioning units [that are] consistent with the needs of a winery."

Though he's loathe to admit it, Keenan has become a bit of a wine snob. E. & J. Gallo out of a jug is too daunting for him. "I probably won't drink it," he says. "Because generally speaking, what went into that [mass-produced] wine is probably going to give me a headache the next morning." And after all, isn't that what his music is for? **CHRISTINE N. ZIEMBA**

Photo by Ron Newkirk

ON LONG ISLAND, MEMORIES OF HARVEY MILK HAVE EXPIRED

The irony of Bay Shore Furriers and Leather Salon is that, while it's the only building on the block that survived a fire six years ago, nobody seems to remember the lanky kid whose parents opened the store in the 1940s. He played linebacker for the junior-varsity team in the then-prosperous south-shore Long Island town, boxed groceries, graduated in 1947 and never really returned.

Today, no one has heard of Harvey Milk in Shore Drug or Bridal Suite or the New Men's Shop, despite the impending release of Gus Van Sant's fine new biopic, *Milk*, starring Sean Penn. Nor have the heavily made-up women smoking outside the office suites, the teens in the pizza joint, anybody drinking at the Playhouse ("A Unique Martini Lounge"), the three mothers pushing strollers to their cars ("wellgoodlucktoyouwiththat!" one says, with fake cheer), the waitress at the kosher deli or the twentysomethings outside the sporting-goods store.

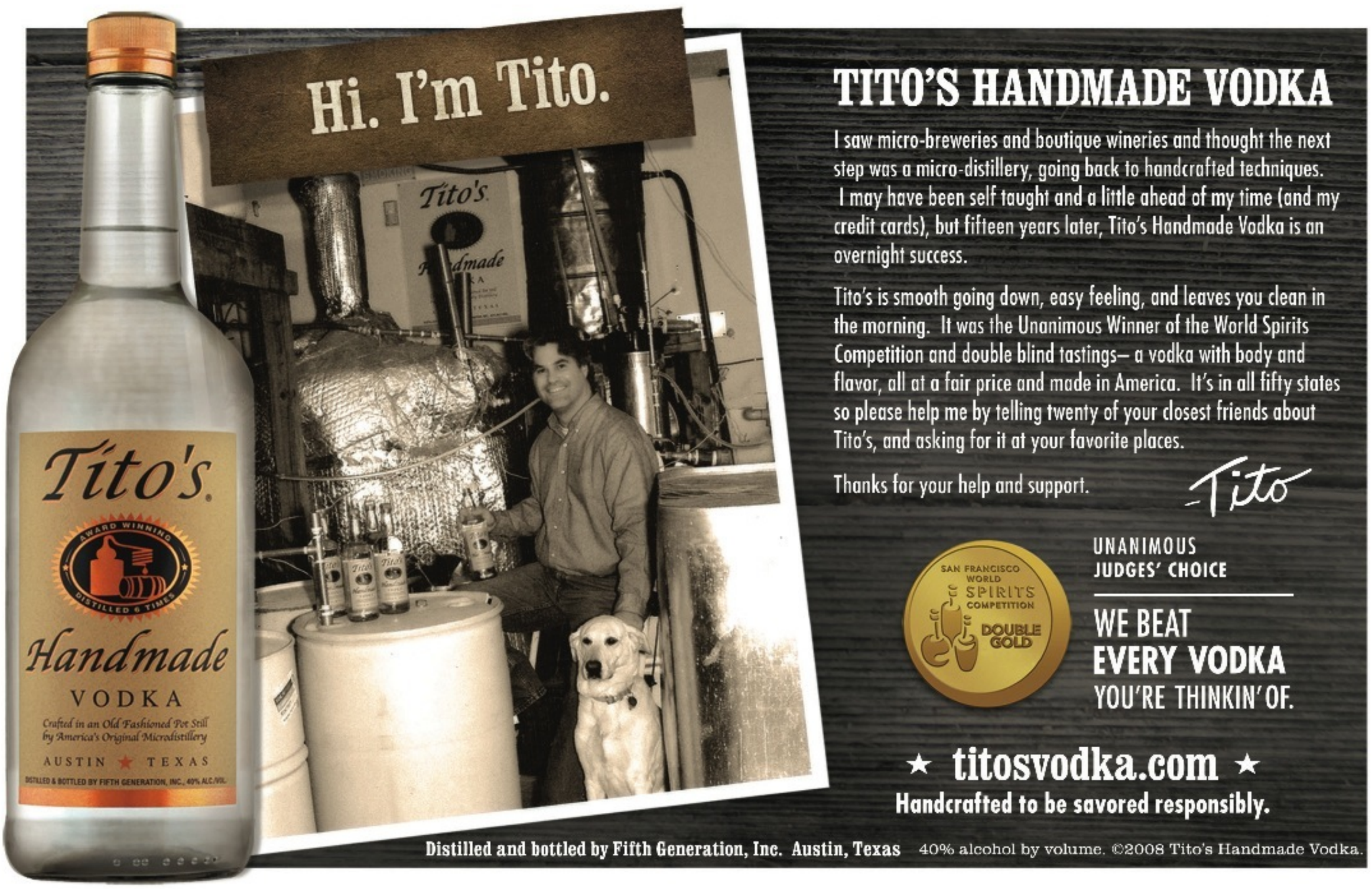
"A movie about a politician? That sounds really boring. No offense," one says, her arms crossed. "What'd he do that was so special?"

Harvey Milk's path to history—and to *Milk*—brought him to college in Albany, and then to the Navy, Wall Street and, in 1970, San Francisco. After opening a camera store there, the charismatic Milk became a community activist and, in 1977, the first openly gay man elected to major public office. He worked as a San Francisco City Supervisor and helped turn the tide on gay-discrimination referendums before being shot and killed (along with mayor George Moscone) in 1978, by former City Supervisor Dan White (played in the film by Josh Brolin).

At Bay Shore Furriers, a woman buzzes me inside. The furs and bulbous hats are impassive in their wooden stalls, the air heavily conditioned. I'm the only customer. The current owner's father bought the place in the '60s, the woman tells me. She's never heard of the Milks either, but she's slightly more excited about the movie than the rest of the people I've talked to. It's coming out in November, I tell her. I remind her again about Sean Penn.

"Sounds like a plan!" she says as if we have a date, and shows me to the door. **JESSE JARNOW**

Photo by Al Jarnow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WHY IS THIS MAN SMILING?

BECAUSE HE'S LIL WAYNE, AND HE HAD A PRETTY DECENT 2008

The year's most compelling rapper by far was Lil Wayne, the tongue-twisting New Orleans savant who never ceased to surprise. To illustrate just how unpredictable and outlandish the dude's year was, we've prepared this brief retrospective quiz. **ALISON FENSTERSTOCK**

1 *HOW MANY TIMES WAS THE PHRASE "A MILLI" UTTERED IN LIL WAYNE'S SMASH-HIT SINGLE OF THE SAME NAME?*
a. 271 b. 666 c. A million

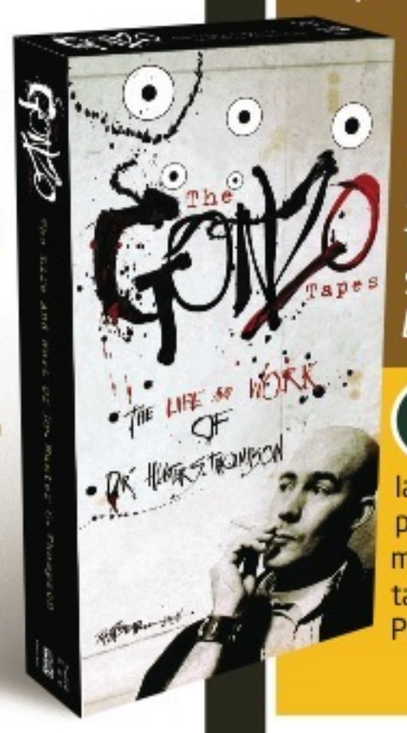
2 *WHAT ANIMAL HAD LIL WAYNE NEVER HEARD OF UNTIL RECENTLY?*
a. Duckbilled platypus b. Koala bear c. Nutria

3 *TRUE OR FALSE: LIL WAYNE SPENT PART OF 2008 GUEST-BLOGGING FOR ESPN.COM?*

4 *WHAT DID LIL WAYNE CLAIM TO BE AT VARIOUS POINTS ON* THA CARTER III*?*
a. A Cajun b. A Martian c. A tarantula d. A venereal disease e. All of the above

5 *WHAT DID CASH MONEY RECORDS CO-FOUNDER BRYAN "BABY" WILLIAMS GET LIL WAYNE FOR HIS 26TH BIRTHDAY?*
a. A case of cough syrup b. A dolphin c. A suitcase with a million dollars in it

ANSWERS: 1 a) We counted. 2 b) Weezy admitted this to a *Blender* interviewer who challenged him to rhyme on the spot using random words. He still managed to rhyme "koala" with "holla." 3 True (he even has "ESPN" tattooed on his arm) 4 e) Also, "the best rapper alive." 5 c) A milli, baby.



the PASTE MAGAZINE MIXED media WHOSE MOTHER WOULD GARFIELD WORSHIP?

OUR FAVORITE FESTIVE BITS OF WHATEVER

1 **Josh Jackson, Editor In Chief →**
GiftCardGiver.com That $20 Best Buy gift card might be better than an ugly sweater, but what to do with the $3.96 left after buying the *Across the Universe* soundtrack? Mail it to Gift Card Giver and they'll donate 100% of the remainder to charities like Habitat For Humanity.

2 **Bill Elek, Events Manager →**
My mom's lasagna The recipe for this 15-lb. behemoth is kept under lock and key—we did list the ingredients on our website, but you'll have to figure out the proportions and preparations yourself.

3 **Nick Purdy, Publisher →**
***Paste's* Holiday Playlist** From Dec. 1 through Christmas Day, we're sharing holiday classics, new and old, by Sufjan Stevens, Mindy Smith, Brian Wilson, Aimee Mann and more. **PasteRadio.com**

4 **Brooke Hatfield, Contributing Writer → Eggnog pie** I like my eggnog pie the way I like my men: Sweet, thick and only around once a year.

5 **José & Nikolle Reyes, Metaleap Design → *It's a Wonderful Life*** José saw it for the first time a few years ago, we both cried, and now—like everyone else—we watch it every year.

6 **Rachael Maddux, Assistant Editor → Outlandish decorations at Ron and Judy McGill's house in Chattanooga, Tenn.** Forget that open fire: You can roast chestnuts on the glow emanating from my hometown's most, um, *impressive* display of holiday cheer.

7 **Steve LaBate, Associate Editor →**
The Gonzo Tapes: The Life and Work of Dr. Hunter S. Thompson A perfect stocking stuffer for Thompson aficionados, this set unearths the writer's audio notes from *Hell's Angels, Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas* and more. Not traditional holiday fare, but it sure beats *'Twas the Night Before Christmas.*

ONLINE For a glimpse at the wonder that is Maureen Elek's lasagna, Brooke Hatfield's go-to eggnog-pie recipe, a list of our favorite holiday movies and a video of Chattanooga's tackiest Christmas house, visit PasteMagazine.com/December08.

Lil Wayne photo by Jonathan Mannion

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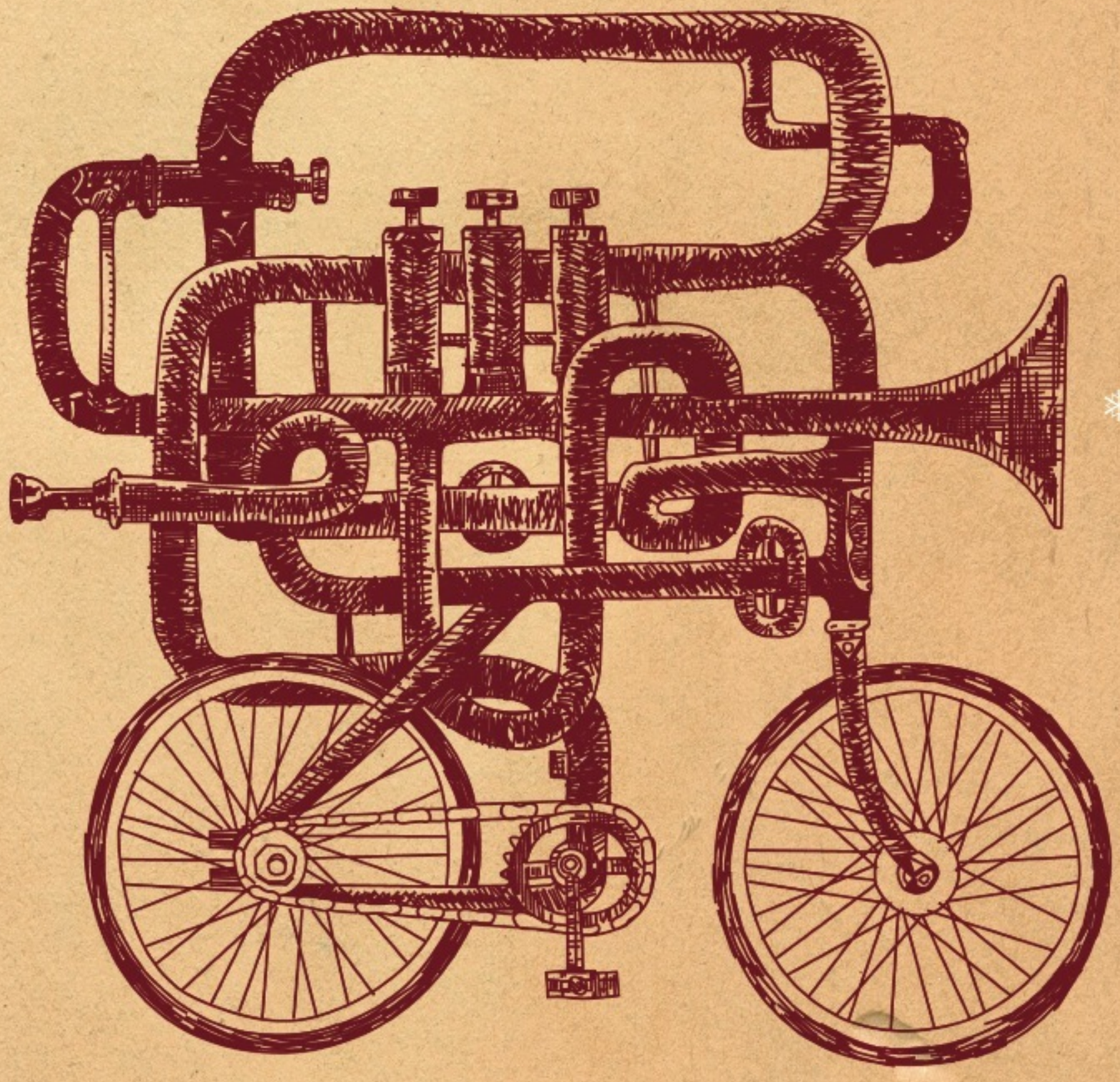

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RECONAISSANCE MAN:
Damon Albarn's musical explorations

In a downtown Toronto park, Damon Albarn is discussing the finer points of composing a Chinese opera when a black squirrel snares his attention. "Do you know we're eating squirrels in England?" he asks, watching the animal forage among the leaves. "It's become a new lean-meat sensation."

He quickly turns the discussion back toward *Monkey: Journey to the West,* the score (and subsequent album) he wrote for the Chinese opera of the same name. Before composing it, Albarn did some foraging of his own on a cultural-reconnaissance trip to China. "We heard a lot of tribal music as well. Up in the mountains. Where these people get out their blades of grass and start playing these kind of strange and ancient grass-generated tunes," he says. "It felt very organic."

Albarn recorded in London and Beijing with a team of European and Chinese musicians. He decided to keep the lyrics in Mandarin and compose using the traditional Chinese scale. "I was looking at a five-point star," he says. "I put the notes of the pentatonic to each point on the star. And I had this great image of stars rotating, and I used that to rotate numbers. It was a very simple music system that could alleviate some of the anxiety of pastiching it."

If you've not been keeping up with Albarn, Mandarin opera may seem like an odd diversion. But China is merely the latest stop on Albarn's post-Blur world tour. Casting aside Britpop after 2003's *Think Tank,* Albarn's universe expanded: He moved from trippy hip-hop (Gorillaz) to slinky Malian guitar (*Mali Music*) to the international supergroup that recorded *The Good, The Bad and The Queen,* and that featured legendary Afrobeat drummer Tony Allen, a veteran of Fela Kuti's band. The two will soon re-team to record in Lagos.

Of course, this musical globetrotting doesn't come cheap, but there is the odd payoff: "Sometimes you hit the ball true," Albarn says, "and you do really well. It's like, what do you do at that point? What do you do when you make money? It's all compost. Money should be compost."

Albarn has recently finished producing the new album for acclaimed Malian pop duo Amadou and Mariam. There's also been talk of Iraqi music. And then there's the business of a third Gorillaz album, which will include a trip to Syria to record a string ensemble.

Albarn says he's accumulated plenty of recordings during his travels. And if the demos ever surface, don't expect to find them in the world-music section. "'World music.' I don't subscribe to that. It's all music," he says. "It's a very bad tagline because it does suggest that we're somehow living on a different planet." And he's got his hands full on this one.

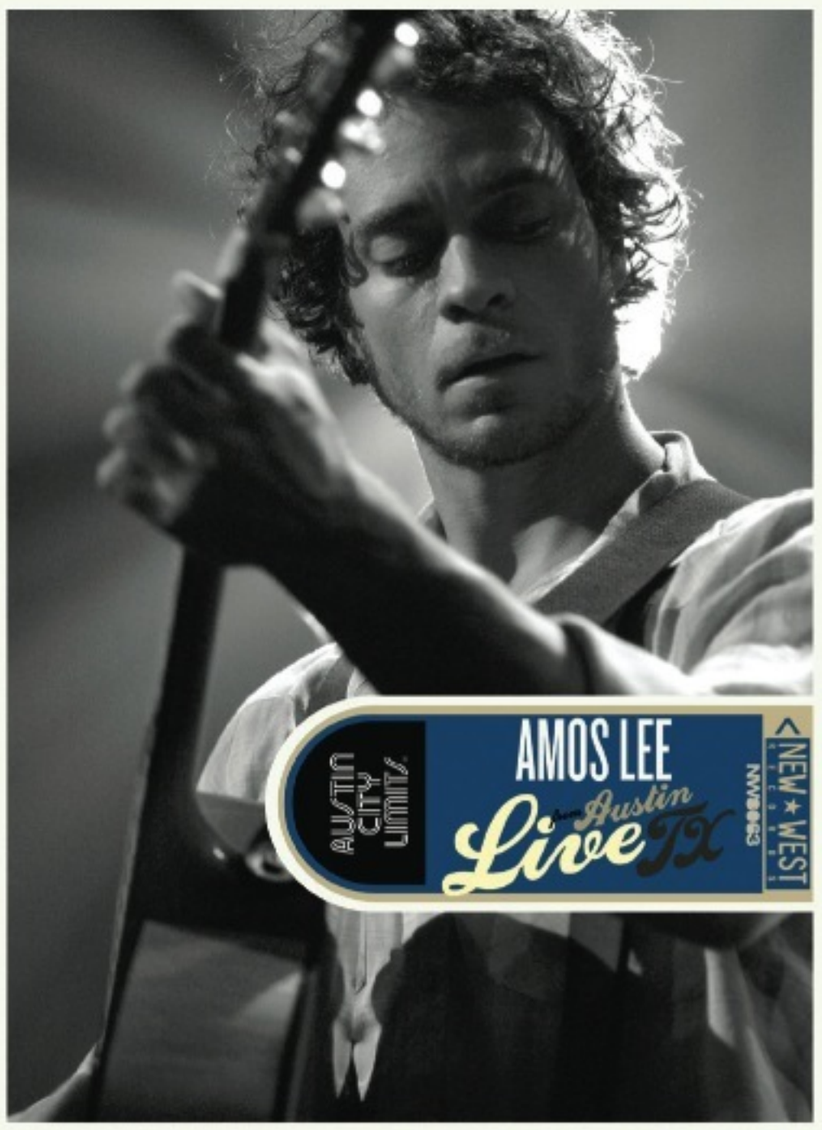
BRAD FRENETTE

Photo by Pennie Smith

NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN FULL CONCERT PERFORMANCE

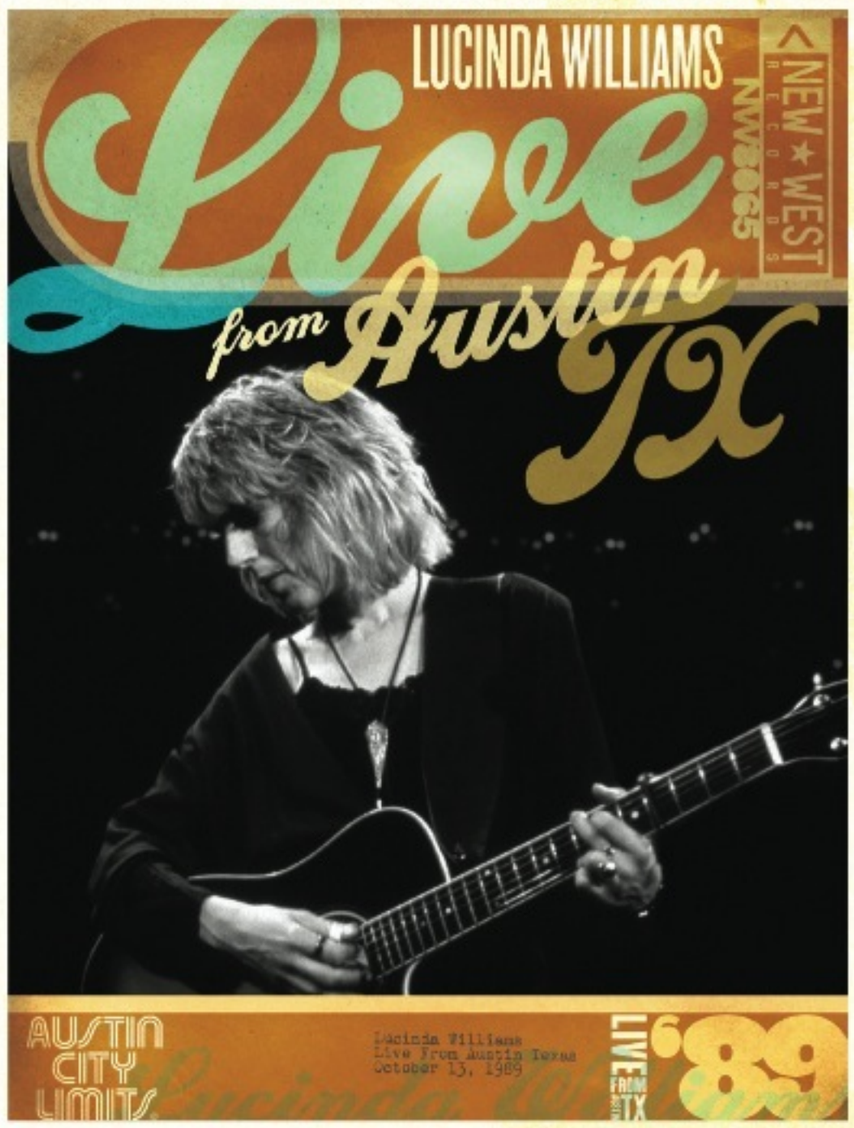
AMOS LEE

from Austin LiveTX



Features
Listen,
Night Train,
Arms Of A Woman
and many more!

LUCINDA WILLIAMS



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MUSICIANS

THE LOW ANTHEM COVERS ALL THE BASES

Tinker and Evers. Reese and Robinson. Trammel and Whitaker. All of baseball's great double-play duos moved in a way that was almost musical. Ben Knox Miller and Jeff Prystowsky extended those harmonies from the baseball diamond to an actual band.

Sure, their wood-bat summer league in rural Connecticut was a long way from the majors, and their baseball exploits now just involve a fantasy league. But to imagine their fluidity on the field, one only needs to hear The Low Anthem's latest LP, *Oh My God, Charlie Darwin*. "From that first double play," Prystowsky jokes, we knew that it would be magic."

But nobody remembers Tinker to Evers without adding first baseman Chance; likewise, The Low Anthem wasn't complete until the addition of fellow Providence resident and classically trained clarinetist Jocie Adams, who joined the band when their second album, *What the Crow Brings*, came out last year. The three members combine to play 27 different instruments on *Charlie Darwin*, including zither, trumpet, pump organ and a Tibetan singing bowl. Each of them also took turns behind the drum kit before the recent addition of drummer Cyrus Scofield. They even hand-painted the covers of the album's first 2,000 copies.

"We spend a lot of time just playing musical chairs with all of our instruments set up in our apartment," Miller says, "and just wait until the frequencies start buzzing and you say, 'this is the arrangement.' A lot of the textures could be played different ways, sometimes even different genres. We'll play the same song with a punk feel and then we'll play it as a folk ballad."

Charlie Darwin opens with a pair of haunting Nick Drake-like ballads, but then the band cranks up the ancient pump organ and starts playing with foot-stomping abandon on the album's lone cover, "Home I'll Never Be," a Tom Waits adaptation of a Jack Kerouac poem. They're constantly mixing up tempo, volume and instrumentation, but always in lock-stop harmony, like a beautifully turned double play. **JOSH JACKSON**

THE LOW ANTHEM **MEMBERS:** (L-R) Ben Knox Miller, Jeff Prystowsky and Jocie Adams (not pictured, Cyrus Scofield) **ALBUM:** *Oh My God, Charlie Darwin* **FOR FANS OF:** Nick Drake, Joe Henry, Gary Jules

MUSICIANS

WHISPERTOWN GOES WITH THE FLOW

Whispertown 2000 frontwoman Morgan Nagler travels with an inflatable mattress. She used to live in a two-bedroom tent in her mother's back yard. She slept under a dining room table when the band shared a Los Angeles apartment, and she currently calls a converted laundry room home. Even her drawl is versatile and free-flowing, shifting a line like "tell everyone I'm done with love" from nonchalance to concern with a fluid change of timbre. And her band's influences? All over the place. "Tod and Casey are very punk," says vocalist Vanesa Corbala. "I came from a Hispanic background and Morgan grew up listening to Joni Mitchell. We like everything from Dr. Dre to The Beatles."

Whispertown's contemporaries like them right back. Nagler formed the band—which inflects her lo-fi folksongs with grubby country-soul—at the encouragement of Rilo Kiley's Blake Sennett and Jenny Lewis. Jimmy Tamborello of Dntel produced an early track. And after hearing their harmony-laden cover of "Look at Miss Ohio" at a Nashville show, Gillian Welch signed the band to her label Acony Records.

Fans partake in the lovefest, too. The band's cozy living-room shows once earned a thank-you package of tequila, John Fante books and a 1977 Martin acoustic guitar from a grateful host—a gesture Nagler recognized as fitting encouragement. "When things like that are happening," she says, "you really know you're on the right path." **HENRY FREEDLAND**

THE WHISPERTOWN 2000
ALBUM: *Swim* **HOMETOWN:** Los Angeles
BAND MEMBERS: Morgan Nagler (vocals, guitar), Tod Adrian Wisenbaker (guitar, drums), Vanesa Corbala (vocals, percussion), Casey Holden Wisenbaker (bass, drums) **FOR FANS OF:** Cat Power, CocoRosie, Rilo Kiley

Photos by Autumn De Wilde

MUSICIANS

THE LITTLE ONES

WORKING FROM THE INSIDE

Ed Reyes can keep a secret. During his recent time spent working in the music industry—as a Maverick Records intern, executive assistant to producer Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds, and then an A&R assistant at Warner Bros.—the sly singer/guitarist cloaked his real objective: a contract for The Little Ones, his jangly power-pop combo. Why didn't he ask his bosses for help? "I really wanted people to know me for my work, and not have them thinking I was only there to get signed," he says. "So I kept it hush-hush until we ended up getting signed to Astralwerks and press started picking up on the band."

Eventually, buzz from the band's debut EP *Sing Song* grew so huge, he was forced to quit his cushy day job. And when he lost his label deal, the student of showbiz knew exactly what to do. "From Babyface, I learned a lot about recording and about the back end of being a songwriter," he explains. "And from my A&R days, I learned how hard the process of signing a band really is, and how a lot of groups don't have a vision for themselves when they get signed."

And so The Little Ones simply redoubled their efforts, put out a second EP themselves (*Terry Tales & Fallen Gates*), then got cracking on their new full-length, *Morning Tide*, all the while never losing sight of their sunny *Pet Sounds*-on-Prozac effervescence. "People always say our sound is cheery and summery, but it just comes out that way. Who knows? Maybe it goes back to being Filipino and the idea of being on an island, surrounded by the ocean. And living in Southern California—that's all we really know!" **TOM LANHAM**

THE LITTLE ONES HOMETOWN: Los Angeles **ALBUM:** *Morning Tide* **BAND MEMBERS** [L-R]: Brian Reyes (bass, keys, vocals), David Esau (drums), Ian Moreno (guitar), Ed Reyes (vocals, guitar), Lee LaDouceur (keys), **FOR FANS OF:** Electric Light Orchestra, The Beach Boys, power-pop band Shoes

The Little Ones photo by Pamela Littky Nico Muhly photo by Samantha West

MUSICIAN

NICO MUHLY

COMPOSING FROM THE A.D.D. CAMP

Don't get Nico Muhly started on categories. Don't even waste time bringing them up because the composer will ignore any suggestion that boundaries mean anything nowadays, and he'll plow forward in his rapid-ricochet speaking style on his loves and, amusingly, his hates: "I love the idea of making an album, working within the confines of that fixed unit, which is still how I experience music," and, "I'm in opposition to Beethoven as he's done now. It's like arriving at a bar at 6 p.m. and some drunk is already there and you don't want to be a part of it. For me, the whole vibe is already set up, and I hate that."

"Loves" and "hates" are themselves categories, it could be argued. But when you're 27 and you've been profiled in *The New Yorker*, and your music has been performed in clubs and at Carnegie Hall, and your collaborators and friends run from Björk to Rufus Wainwright to Philip Glass, and your obsession is English Renaissance church composers, the whole musical world probably seems there for the taking. Why bother bean-counting such bounty? Oh, glorious feast!

"I hate the idea of doing one thing," Muhly says from his loft in New York's Chinatown. "I admire specialists but I'm not one at heart. It's generational, too—you learn from people older than you who do something amazingly well and with focus, but I'm in the scatter-brained A.D.D. camp."

His first album, *Speaks Volumes*, is Muhly and various friends playing instrumental works on mostly acoustic instruments: the piano, the viola, the voice or weird percussion instruments. It's a friendly album. Moody and a little timid. Pretty. The music is brilliantly immediate because it reflects our own cultural insecurities. We're nice, we're smart—right? But we have no idea where we're going, or what our world will look like around the next corner.

Mothertongue, Muhly's second album, was recorded in New York and Iceland and feels even more handmade. "The Only Tune" is a morbid three-part folksong in which a woman drowns her sister to make a fiddle from her body parts. Muhly says his parents, both artists, sang him the tune as a child. "I can't say that I aim to please anybody," Muhly says in his half-joking/half-dead-serious tone, "it's somewhere between 'fuck the audience' and 'please love me, I'm desperate.'" **PIERRE RUHE**

NICO MUHLY
HOMETOWN: New York **ALBUM:** *Mothertongue*
FOR FANS OF: Björk, Steve Reich, Bang on a Can

THROW A NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY.

MAKE A DISCO BALL FROM OLD CDS. DRESS UP. TREAT YOUR GUESTS TO A SOULFUL MIX, AND MIX THEM A SHIRLEY TEMPLE-INSPIRED TREAT. DOCUMENT THE NIGHT WITH FUNKY CAMERAS. RESOLVE TO MAKE 2009 SHINE.

RECIPE: The "Don't Call Me Shirley"

① Mix 3 parts citrus vodka (1 1/2 oz.), 1 part Grenadine (1/2 oz.) and a splash of lime juice
② Shake over ice; add a splash of club soda
③ Rub the rim of the glass with a lime wedge; coat with sugar. Garnish with cherry.

HOW TO: CD Disco Ball

① Cut old or blank CDs into ½-inch squares with kitchen shears
② Run fishing wire through styrofoam ball to hang
③ Glue squares evenly all over ball, silver side up

PLAYLIST: Soul Lang Syne

① Jamie Lidell "Another Day"
② Parliament "Flash Light"
③ James Brown "Get On The Good Foot"
④ Wilson Pickett "In the Midnight Hour"
⑤ The Staple Singers "Heavy Makes You Happy (Sha-Na Boom Boom)"
⑥ Freda Payne "Band of Gold"
⑦ Curtis Mayfield "Superfly"
⑧ Aretha Franklin "Good Times"
⑨ Otis Redding "New Year's Resolution"

DECORATIONS:

Black chair by Robin Bruce ($789), **mirror chest** by Imax ($229) and **white Lola lamp** by Arteriors Home ($249) courtesy of AREA. **Stainless steel cocktail glass** ($12.99 for two), **metallic sequin toss pillow** (24.99) and **grey velvet window panel** ($29.99) from Target. **Silver star wall decal ($36)** by dVider.com.

CLOTHING:

Dress by **213** ($132). Bubble ring by **Andrew Hamilton Crawford** ($125). Men's jeans by **[city of others]** ($100). Soho Fit shirt by **Ben Sherman** ($79) and silkscreened necktie by **Nick Canada** ($44) courtesy of 1*5*0.

ANYONE CAN PLAY PHOTOGRAPHER

Based on a Japanese camera produced by the Russian Arms & Optics Factory in the '80s and later imported to Austria by a group of students, Lomography cameras are known for their super-saturated colors, natural vignette and grainy look. Since they're essentially plastic toy cameras, they're affordable—prices start at $30, and they're user-friendly—Lomo photographers agree to rules like "take your camera everywhere you go," "don't think" and "be fast." **Lomography.com.** KATE KIEFER

➥ Models: Daniel Homrich and Pooja Khanna. Hair by Allison Brown for Grow (growsalon.com). Makeup by Susan Muscari. Photography by Jamie Hopper.

ONLINE See behind-the-scenes photos from *Paste*'s holiday photo shoot at PasteMagazine.com/December08.

Cat Stevens

DELUXE Editions

2 Disc Sets

Tea For The Tillerman AND *Teaser And The Firecat*

THE LEGENDARY SINGER-SONGWRITER'S TWO MOST BELOVED ALBUMS,

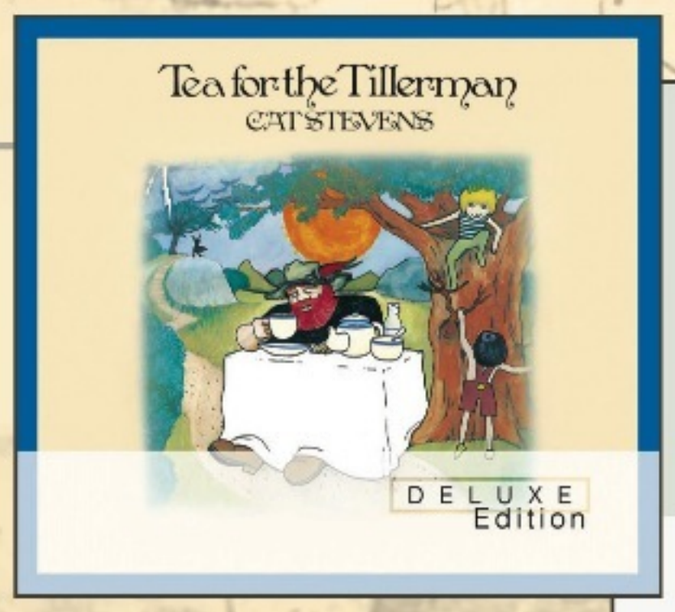
BOTH CERTIFIED TRIPLE PLATINUM,

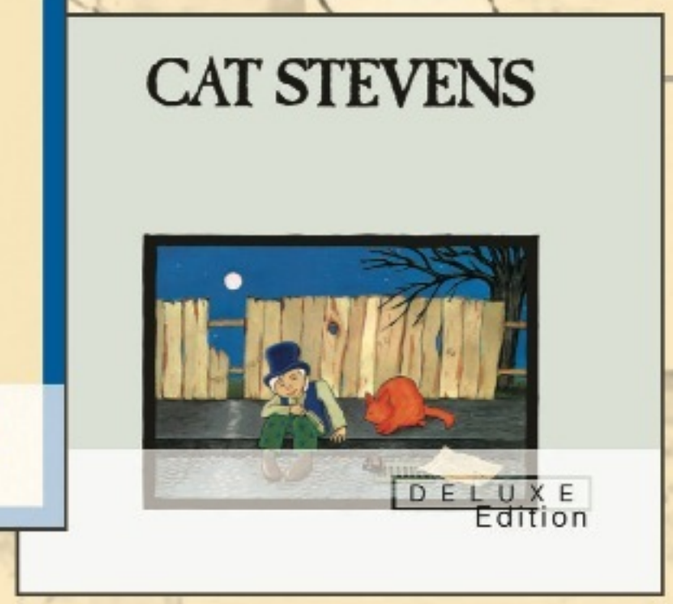
GET THE *DELUXE EDITION* TREATMENT, SUPERVISED BY THE ARTIST HIMSELF.

Each Newly Remastered with A Second Disc Of Rarities
Hand-picked by Cat Stevens now known as the artist, Yusuf

Rarities include Early Demo versions Of "Wild World,"
"Morning Has Broken," "How Can I Tell You" and "Miles From Nowhere"

Also features an unreleased version of the hit "Peace Train" and
previously unreleased live performances from the BBC, his Majikat tour
and from Cat's debut American performance at Los Angeles' Troubadour





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RHINESTONE COWBOY:

A visit to Nashville's flashiest boutique

Park at the foot of Music Row. Step into the Nashville sun. Look left, look right. Squint. You miss it the first time, the place you're trying to find, the stately storefront, the house of Manuel—such a subtle façade, an oyster shell clasped around a pearl.

Come on in. Glide across the dark hardwood floors, breathe in the atmosphere, the history. The vibe is old-school masculine like a steakhouse, a saloon, a bordello. "His clothes feel like sex and money," Keith Urban once said of Manuel. Urban would know. Manuel dolled him up for a 2001 awards show in a cream-and-black suit with a drawstring fly.

Here he comes now, the man himself—Manuel. He was born Manuel Arturo José Cuevas Martinez, but now he is just one name, two syllables: Man. Well.

His hair is swept back and white as swan feathers. He wears a black shirt tucked into black pants, with a black ascot tied rakishly around his throat. He resembles Brando, but shorter. Much shorter. Manuel is roughly the size of a garden gnome. And yet he moves regally, speaks mischievously. He seems amused by his own presence.

How could he not be? This son of Michoacán, Mexico, has spent his life outfitting country singers and other peacocks. He dressed the late Porter Wagoner in six different decades. Wagoner was a perfect model, an old-school baritone whose lanky frame allowed the clothes to drape, providing excellent acreage for Manuel's signature shower of rhinestones.

Manuel's flamboyant duds carry on a tacky-chic tradition. His mentor Nudie Cohn's glammy "Nudie suits" were beloved by Gram Parsons in the late 1960s. And before Nudie, country music had Nathan Turk—he's the one who put the Maddox Brothers in violet suits trimmed with gold and sage embroidery after they returned from World War II. Today, Manuel—a spry 70 years old—dresses like-minded dandies, to the tune of three grand per jacket.

He'll let you try one on. He'd be delighted for you to slip into his handiwork. Try this one—a smoky number cut like a tux, with jade tendrils climbing the shoulders. Oh yes, this will do. It looks like something Keith Urban would wear to an awards show. It feels like sex and money. **NICK MARINO**

Jack White photo by Cambridge Jones

4 Gnarls Barkley
Who's Gonna Save My Soul

5 Fleet Foxes
White Winter Hymnal

6 Lykke Li
A Little Bit

7 Jamie Lidell
Another Day

8 Justice
DVNO

9 She & Him
Why Do You Let Me Stay Here?

10 Feist
I Feel It All

11 Hot Chip
Ready for the Floor

12 Vampire Weekend
Cape Cod Kwassa Kwassa

13 Flight of the Conchords
Ladies of the World

14 Ting Tings
Great DJ

15 Dr. Dog
Alaska

16 Laura Marling
Ghosts

17 Spiritualized
Soul on Fire

18 Portishead
The Rip

19 M83
Kim & Jessie

20 Bon Iver
The Wolves (Act I and II)

21 Mates of State
My Only Offer

22 Death Cab for Cutie
Cath

23 Santogold
LES Artistes

24 Devendra Banhart
Carmensita

25 My Morning Jacket
Touch Me I'm Going to Scream

MTV2 Subterranean and Paste Magazine

Top 25 Videos for 2008

1
TV on the Radio
Golden Age

2
Okkervil River
Lost Coastlines

3
Radiohead
All I Need

Tune in on 12/11 and 12/18 at 1AM ET/midnight CT to see the viewer voted top videos.

SUBTERRANEAN

Paste

MTV2

THE LITTLEST DJ

BY DOUGLAS WOLK ILLUSTRATION BY WAYNE BREZINKA

I've probably spent more time listening to music in 2008 than any year of my decade-and-a-half career as a music critic. I've also probably heard less *new* music in 2008 than in any other year of my career. That's because there's another music critic in the house now: my three-year-old son, who has, unforgivably, developed his own taste.

When Sterling was an infant and friends asked how he felt about music, I used to make jokes: "He's really into Krautrock these days, and lately he's been branching out into the European free-improv scene of the '80s—you know, he keeps pestering me to pick up more Han Bennink records." At that age, Sterling seemed fine with whatever we played, so I ran through a stack of new releases every day, playing albums I was reviewing and occasionally dipping into the archives.

As soon as he could put words together, though, he started articulating what he wanted to hear. And what he wanted to hear was very specific. For a few months, there was a particular song from a Music Together CD that he'd demand over and over and over. At one point, he (mercifully) decided that My Bloody Valentine's "Soft As Snow (But Warm Inside)" was his favorite song, and wanted to hear it every time he got into the car. Then he figured out how to work the CD player, and it was all over.

Every parent has to make a few sacrifices in the name of preserving domestic tranquility. One of ours is that Sterling generally gets to listen to whatever he wants, because otherwise he'll just take off what we're playing and put on something else, and that never ends well. So we've tried to find some common ground—music we can all enjoy, or at least tolerate. He's OK with Elizabeth Mitchell's exquisite children's records *You Are My Flower* and *You Are My Little Bird*. (We took him to see Mitchell and her band play recently, and he was riveted.) He can take or leave the Putumayo Kids line of internationalist rugrat music, though he loves *New Orleans Playground*, especially Clifton Chenier's zydeco cover of "Choo Choo Ch'Boogie." (I tried to play him the Louis Jordan original, but he wasn't having it.) For a while, we listened to a different Motown album every morning at breakfast until, eventually, he decided he'd had it with Motown.

> Just because we're trying to shape his curious little mind doesn't mean that our favorite music will ever be more to him than the stuff his parents like.

Mostly, though, he is passionately, physically, wholly devoted to a few staples: the *Multiplication Rock* soundtrack, *Baby Loves Jazz* and, above all, They Might Be Giants' *Here Come the ABCs*. He can spend an entire afternoon blissfully singing along with *Here Come the ABCs*, running around the living room, calling out all the letters. I sort of enjoyed the album the first dozen times. That was several hundred plays ago. After Sterling goes to bed, I often sneak up to my office and try to rinse the singsong melodies out of my head with some old favorite album of my own, which is good for my nerves but not so good for keeping up professionally.

Still, I love how much my son loves those songs, and I especially love that they make him want to make music himself. (One of my proudest moments as a parent was discovering him standing in front of a songbook, holding my ukulele and singing.) He likes flipping through my records now; maybe someday he'll care about what they sound like. But just because we're trying to shape his curious little mind doesn't mean that our favorite music will ever be more to him than the stuff his parents like. "Remember," my wife and I remind each other, "'Smells Like Teen Spirit' is to him what 'All Shook Up' is to us."

➥ DOUGLAS WOLK IS THE AUTHOR OF *LIVE AT THE APOLLO* AND *READING COMICS*. HE LIVES IN PORTLAND, ORE.

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THE SOCO MUSIC EXPERIENCE

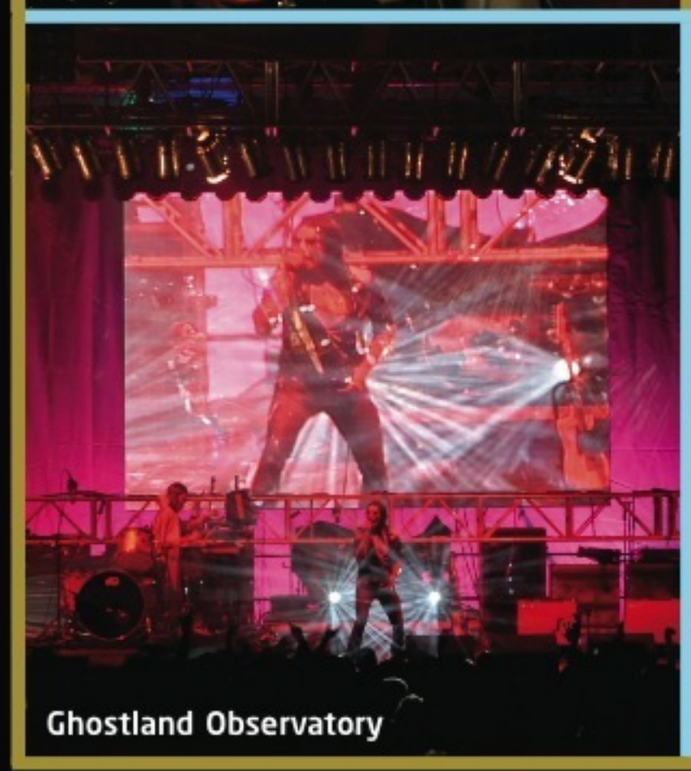
THE SOCO MUSIC EXPERIENCE BARNSTORMED ACROSS THE COUNTRY ONCE AGAIN THIS SUMMER, AND *PASTE* WAS THERE FOR ALL FIVE FESTIVALS. KICKING OFF IN *PASTE*'S HOMETOWN OF ATLANTA, THE SUMMER'S FIRST SOCO MUSIC EXPERIENCE BROUGHT TOGETHER A DIVERSE GROUP OF ACTS, FROM THE SOULFUL R&B OF **RYAN SHAW** TO THE HYPNOTIC ELECTRONICA OF **GHOSTLAND OBSERVATORY** TO THE GRUNGY HARD ROCK OF **AGAINST ME!** AND IT ONLY GOT BETTER FROM THERE, FROM DENVER TO SAN DIEGO; MADISON, WIS., TO ALTAMONT, N.Y., THE SOCO MUSIC EXPERIENCE PRESENTED TOP-SHELF ACTS LIKE **THE BLACK KEYS**, **THE ROOTS**, **GNARLS BARKLEY** AND **JUSTICE**, JUST TO NAME A FEW. WITH FREE ADMISSION, AND A HOST OF NON-MUSIC RELATED ACTIVITIES LIKE CORNHOLE (THE MUCH-BELOVED BEANBAG-TOSSING GAME), AS WELL AS SOUTHERN COMFORT DRINKS TO HELP BEAT THE HEAT, THE SOCO MUSIC EXPERIENCE PROVED YET AGAIN TO BE A PREMIER SUMMER MUSIC FESTIVAL EVENT.

To read more about the SoCo Music Experience, visit www.pastemagazine.com/scmx

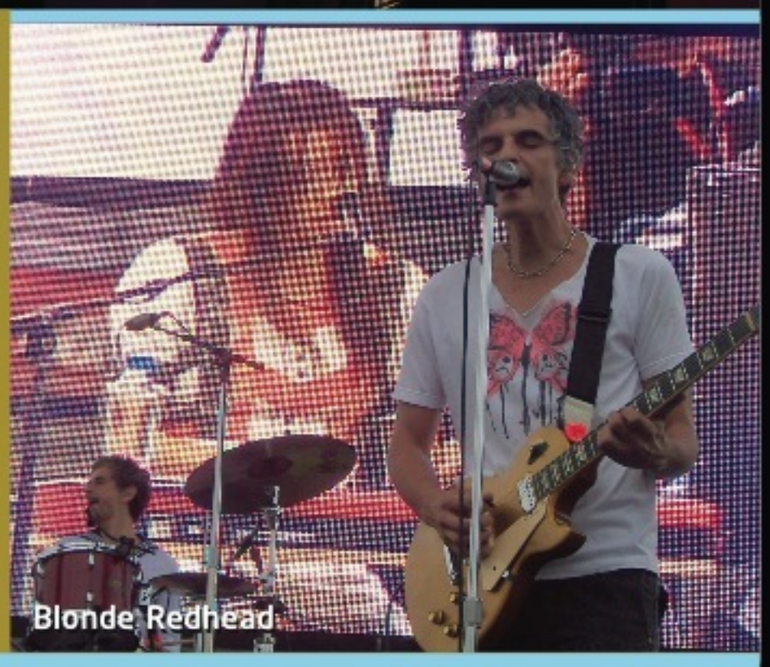
The Black Keys

The Roots

Against Me!


Ghostland Observatory

Common


Blonde Redhead

From Soundcheck to Encore, Play It Safe. Please Drink Responsibly.
Liqueur, 21-50% Alc. by Volume, Southern Comfort Company, Louisville, KY ©2008

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MOVIE HOPPING WHILE ROME BURNS

BY JESSE JARNOW ILLUSTRATION BY LEAH HAYES

David Lynch once called film "a magical medium that allows you to dream in the dark." Walking the carpeted hallways and miniature lobbies of a Times Square megaplex, then, is like stealing between people's private visions. I've paid $12.50 for admission into a movie theater with lax security, giving me freedom to roam the various screenings, and the movies I see constitute a Lynchian avant-garde composite. I glance at the audience's faces before I sit. It's comforting to see people laugh at the same time at the same punchline; comforting that an emotional majority can still be measured inside a multiplex.

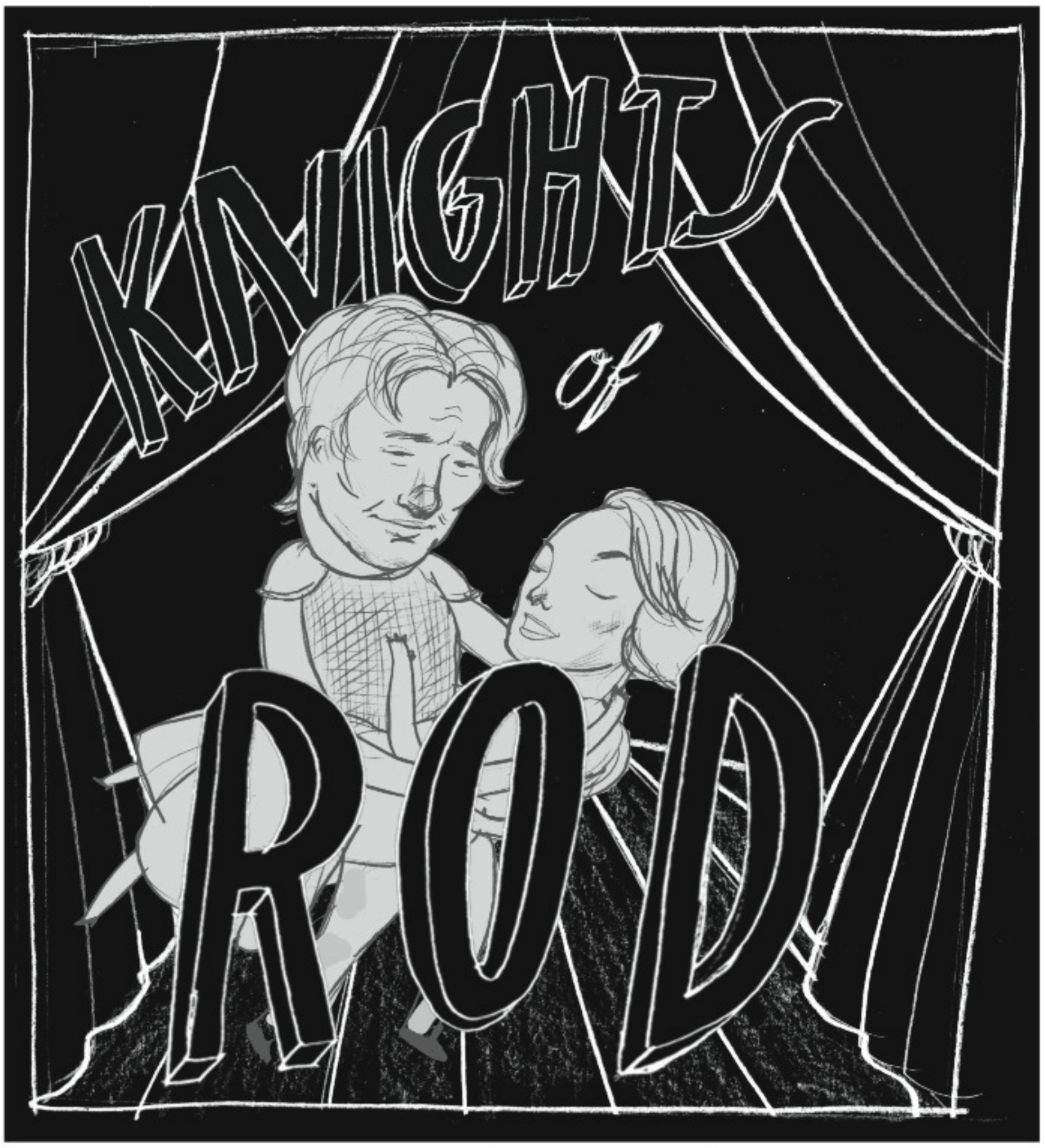
Knights of Rod, I misread the marquee ticker for the first film I sneak into. It's about to start. But why does Rod get knights? Are they animated?

Bleached stock. A girl runs on the beach. Her father swings her in his arms. Nobody is in armor on horseback. The Warner Bros. logo appears, followed by jaunty folk-pop. Richard Gere and Diane Lane's names appear in the credits. The odds of spontaneous jousting decrease by the frame. A title card reads, *Nights in Rodanthe*. Diane Lane's husband is there. He asks for her back. Her husband is not Richard Gere. I see where this going. (Rodanthe, most likely.) At least I didn't misread the marquee-ticker's abbreviation as *Nights in Rod*. And, I'm out.

Up the escalator, I duck into *The Duchess*. A woman on screen looks like Natalie Portman, but isn't. She gazes meaningfully at something on a chair. The crowd has nearly audible conversations. "You must leave and be with me," a dashing actor says to Nearly Natalie. I see. The game of discerning a plot and then leaving the theater is alarmingly short.

In *Flash of Genius*, some guy in the '60s has apparently just invented the windshield wiper. A crazy and mildly endearing notion. A true story, probably. Which means he will succumb to either corruption or a tragic fall (or both) before redemption. There is unmuffled yawning nearby. A card appears on screen: "Four months later." "Ford wants out," someone tells the Genius.

Eagle Eye, at least, engages. I walk in during a scene I remember from the preview. The writing is tight: A mysterious, totalitarian entity tells the leads to do stuff, wreaking havoc if they don't. A manic car chase begins. A classical trope, but still exhausting. After the chase, the filmmakers electrocute a character for good measure. This is the only film I've seen today that seems conscious of its own power.



I'm happy to repurpose Hollywood's manipulations to my own needs, but after all these movies my emotions now run on shuffle.

I yearn to be drawn in whole. I desire weepiness. Even when I know what's coming, there is a primal satisfaction in being wrenched helpless by a story arc and soundtrack cues. Except for a self-contained preview for Gus Van Sant's Harvey Milk biopic, I feel nothing. A nearby marquee-ticker announces *Miracle at Somethingsomething*. I don't bother to read the rest. I need a miracle, whatever it is.

Inside, a war is on. A portly soldier cradles a child who might be mute, and probably still can't understand English. Then, breasts. And race relations. I still feel nothing. I'm happy to repurpose Hollywood's manipulations to my own needs, but after all these movies my emotions now run on shuffle.

Eventually, I find *Burn After Reading*, the Coen brothers' latest. I've seen it already, but now their voice—all the broken sentences and borderline slapstick—shines through the smog. I stay for 20 minutes, laugh a lot and finally relax.

When I leave, there's machine gun fire from inside the *Miracle* movie. It fades as I descend the empty escalator.

➥ JESSE JARNOW IS A *PASTE* CONTRIBUTING EDITOR.

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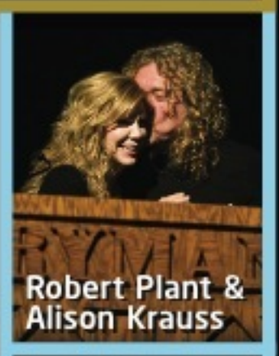
THE AMERICANA MUSIC AWARDS

For a genre as anti-celebrity as Americana, the Americana Music Awards still cranked up the star wattage at this year's hootenanny, held at Nashville's stately Ryman Auditorium. The event, which capped off the *Paste*-sponsored Americana Music Association Conference and Festival, included appearances by a movie star (**Billy Bob Thornton**), pop star (**Sheryl Crow**), rock star (**Robert Plant**) and a plethora of roots-music fixtures (**Alison Krauss, Steve Earle, Levon Helm, Buddy Miller**). Plant and Krauss won Album of the Year for their *Raising Sand* disc, Earle gave **Joan Baez** the Spirit of Americana Free Speech in Music Award, and the stage eventually filled up for a run through Grateful Dead tune "Tennessee Jed," which just might have been a nod to AMA boss Jed Hilly.

Jason Ringenberg

Levon Helm



Robert Plant & Alison Krauss

Joan Baez

Photos by Erika Mollerk Goldring and Deone Jahnke

THE INFORMER

PASTE'S GUIDE TO THE NEXT TWO MONTHS IN CULTURE

12/2 Ol' Dirty Bastard biography *Digging for Dirt: The Life and Death of ODB*. Also: *Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian and Casablanca: The Ultimate Collector's Edition* on DVD.

DEC08 **& JAN**09

2 3

12/3 New 13-part music/talk series *Spectacle: Elvis Costello With...* premieres on the Sundance Channel (guests to include Elton John, Lou Reed, Tony Bennett and Bill Clinton).

9 10 17

12/9 *Paste*'s #2 movie of 2008, *The Dark Knight*, starring the late Heath Ledger, and *The Wire: Complete Series* arrive on DVD.

12/10 Michelle Williams (*Brokeback Mountain*; *Synecdoche, New York*) stars in Cannes favorite *Wendy and Lucy*.

12/17 NBC hosts new special *A Muppets Christmas: Letters to Santa*, starring Uma Thurman, Nathan Lane, New York mayor Michael Bloomberg and all your favorite muppets.

19 25

12/19 Jim Carrey and Zooey Deschanel in *Yes Man*.

12/25 Owen Wilson and Jennifer Aniston star in the film adaptation of John Grogan's celebrated canine tale *Marley & Me*.

12/26 Dustin Hoffman and Emma Thompson star in *Last Chance Harvey*. Also: Animated 1982 Lebanon War "documentary" *Waltz with Bashir*.

26 6

1/6 New book *Appetite for Self-Destruction: The Rise and Fall of the Record Industry in the Digital Age*. Also: *Battlestar Galactica* Season 4, and Adult Swim's *Frisky Dingo* Season 2 on DVD.

15 16

1/16 Adrienne Brody and Rachel Weisz in *The Brothers Bloom*.

1/15 The 10-day Sundance Film Festival begins in Park City, Utah.

SUNDANCE 09 FILM FESTIVAL

18 20

1/20 Debut album from the Beyman Brothers, featuring Spinal Tap's Christopher Guest on mandolin, guitar and—Nigel would be so disappointed—clarinet.

1/18 Premiere of Showtime original series *United States of Tara*, penned by *Juno* writer Diablo Cody. Also: International music-industry conference MIDEM begins in Cannes, France.

27

1/27 Gary Louris and Mark Olson team up for their first post-Jayhawks album, *Ready for the Flood*. Also: Cure tribute album *Just Like Heaven*, featuring Dean & Britta, The Brunettes and more.

ONLINE For an expanded, day-by-day list of album, film, game, DVD and book releases, TV events, concerts, festivals and more, visit ***pastemagazine.com/theinformer.***